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The Friday Letter

Vol. 9 No. 4

February 17, 1989

A Message From the Former Administrator

To All FNS Employees:

I have enjoyed working with you these past 2 years. Together we have endeavored to make the Food and Nutrition Service an organization proud of fulfilling its mission and a good place to work. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the support you gave me.

Some of you have become friends, and many, many more colleagues with whom I am proud to have been associated. I regret not having been able to get to know more of you better. But I want you to know I still believe each of you makes an important contribution to the functioning of the whole—from deputy and regional administrators to clerk-typists, drivers, and copy machine operators. Continue the good work!

I leave with pleasant memories, a little sadness, and a sincere wish that all of you find what you are looking for in life. Until we meet again!

Anna Kondratas

On the Hill



Hearing Held on WIC Program

On February 8, the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing on the WIC Program as a prelude to reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Programs. Witnesses included former Senator Lawton Chiles (D-FL), chairman of the National Committee to Prevent Infant Mortality; Donald Schiff, American Academy of Pediatrics; Djamillah Samad, WIC Association of New York; and Loren Bell, president of the National Association of WIC Directors.

Following recognition of WIC's 16th birthday, testimony by the witnesses centered on the successes of WIC as a nutrition-based program with an education program. Other comments included:

- That improvements can be made in the WIC Program through additional funding to serve more of the eligible population;
- That better coordination with Medicaid is necessary; and
- That there should be greater emphasis placed on the promotion of breastfeeding.

The expiring Child Nutrition Programs are being reauthorized through the proposed bill, H.R. 24. FNS has been invited to testify in the House on the reauthorization March 23. No dates for hearings in the Senate have been scheduled.

Ambassador Yeutter Accepts Position as USDA Secretary

Former Ambassador Clayton Yeutter was sworn in as Secretary of Agriculture February 8 after the Senate endorsed his nomination by a 100-0 vote.

Secretary Yeutter, Former President Reagan's U.S. Trade Representative and
(Yeutter Continued Next Page)

-Story by Janice Feld
Office of Governmental Affairs

Two Child-Care Bills are Presented Before House Hearing

On February 9, the House Committee on Education and Labor held a hearing on two child-care bills, H.R. 3 and H.R. 30. Committee Chairman Augustus Hawkins (D-CA) said the hearings addressed "one of the country's most pressing issues: the lack of affordable child care." The ranking minority member, Representative William Goodling (R-PA), said he believes there is a Federal role in child care, but it should try to integrate low, middle, and upper-income households; consider parental choice; and involve business in the process.



The hearing focused largely on the testimony of expert witnesses (child psychologists and researchers) from Yale University, the Urban Institute, the University of Virginia, and the University of California at Berkley.

The witnesses said 45 percent of the work force is female and that there are 10 million children under the age of 6 who need child-care services.

Witnesses argued in favor of a cohesive public policy for quality child care and against any programs that were merely custodial. The experts said quality child-care standards can be set and can be quantified by staff-to-child ratios, group size, staff training, and stability of staff.

Members of the committee questioned the witnesses about the advisability of tax credits, rather than direct spending programs, and about helping families with only one income where the mother stays home to raise the children.

-Story by Robert Beard
Office of Governmental Affairs

(Yeutter Continued)

a successful farmer, lawyer, and businessman, served in USDA previously at the subcabinet level. As Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Consumer Services in the early 1970's, he was responsible for domestic food assistance programs.



At an earlier hearing before the Senate Agriculture Committee, Secretary Yeutter expressed support for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children.

He also served as Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Commodity Programs, USDA, and Deputy Special Trade Representative during the Tokyo round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

As U.S. Trade Representative, Secretary Yeutter spearheaded efforts to give American farmers access to more foreign markets. He has called for resumption of world trade talks, which are currently deadlocked over the issue of unfair trade subsidies and trade barriers.

Secretary Yeutter holds a Ph.D. in agricultural economics and a law degree. Prior to joining the Reagan administration, he served as president and chief executive officer of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Secretary Yeutter and his family own 2,500 acres of farmland in Nebraska. He and his wife, Jeanne, and their four children divide their time between residences in Virginia and Lincoln, Nebraska.



-Story by Wini Scheffler
Public Information Staff

New Jersey Starts WIC Formula Rebate Program

MARO Administrator Chris Martin and Supplemental Food Programs Director Patricia Dombroski were praised at a press conference held recently in Trenton, New Jersey, as state and local Department of Health officials launched an infant formula rebate program. The new program is expected to save \$7 million this fiscal year.



Trenton Mayor Arthur Holland (left) expresses his commitment to the city's WIC program to MARO Administrator Chris Martin.

The state agency, which serves 71,000 participants monthly, will receive \$1.10 from Ross Laboratories for each can of Similac with iron and Isamil formula redeemed with WIC vouchers.

Health Commissioner Molly Joel Coye cited the efforts of the regional office staff in bringing the program about and told reporters, "The rebate money could help us reach up to 40 percent of eligible women and children statewide, compared with the 35 percent we're now reaching.

"The infant mortality rate is too high in New Jersey. Expanding the program could help us reduce it," she added.

Trenton Mayor Arthur Holland praised the WIC program when he introduced Coye.

"People didn't live as long during the years these murals depict," he said, pointing behind him to an enormous life-sized color painting of laborers working in two of Trenton's oldest factories. "Families have changed. Ninety-three percent of AFDC cases are one-parent families. It's hard for me as mayor of this city to imagine a more important program than the WIC program. It's the future for many children."

Representatives from the state's major newspapers and television and radio stations covered the hour-long event. The presentation concluded with a visit to a WIC clinic at the same location.

-Story and photo by Marian Wig
MARO Public Affairs Staff

Indian Tribes in Colorado and Arizona Helped by Food Bank

A nonprofit, nondenominational group has begun monthly distribution of food and nonfood items to supplement food stamp and commodity programs on the Ute Mountain Indian reservation in southwestern Colorado and the Navajo reservation in Arizona. Don Stewart's Feed My People Food Bank is headquartered in Flagstaff, Arizona. It collects donated items from local farmers and large corporations and delivers them by truck to the reservations.

The first Ute Mountain issuance was November 3. Successive distributions are scheduled for the first Thursday of each month at the Towaoc, Colorado, food distribution warehouse. The November distribution was well organized and happily received. It was completed in 4 hours.

These giveaways do not duplicate commodities in FDPIR packages. Items include tortillas and bread, paper products (including paper towels, napkins, and diapers) and good quality

(Tribes Continued Last Page)

MARO Reopens Office in Regional Office

Scores of MARO employees were waiting to cut the ribbon, but the guest of honor was missing.

Unbeknownst to Barbara Hunt, MARO Public Affairs secretary, she had won the "Rename the Jersey City Field Office contest" held by Pat Cumiskey, field operations director.

Hunt was finally found and summoned with her scissors to cut the ribbon at the dedication ceremony. Her winning entry was "Garden State Field Office."

Of the 36 who entered the contest, "Hunt was the most enthusiastic contestant, submitting her entry first and checking in regularly to see how the contest was progressing," says Cumiskey.

Although Cumiskey selected Garden State Field Office as the new name, she said the office will be known officially as the Trenton Area Field Office because of the geographic area it covers. The field office moved recently into vacant space at the regional office due to fire code regulations and high rent.



Barbara Hunt, Public Affairs secretary (center), poses with the Trenton Area Field Office staff after the office's dedication ceremony in which Hunt did the ribbon-cutting honors. From left are: Pat Cumiskey, field operations director; Freda Santos, the field office's new secretary; Chris Martin, regional administrator; John McClellan, deputy regional administrator; Carmen Speranza, food program specialist; and Bill Kluxen, who became the officer in charge in October. Missing from the photograph is Minetya Juarbe, food program specialist.

-Story and photo by Marian Wig
MARO Public Affairs Staff

Southwest Employees Get Inside Scoop

SWRO Public Affairs staff recently kicked off a new internal communications initiative intended to broaden employee knowledge of FNS issues across the board, especially on topics that are expected to receive media attention.

The introductory session included presentations on three current issues: (1) the controversy over the desired levels of sugar, salt, and fat in school lunches, (2) the Ad Council/FNS publicity campaign for the Food Stamp Program, and (3) background information on Secretary Clayton Yeutter.

Future sessions will be held with regional office and field staffs as the

need arises. Written communications will also be used to keep employees updated.

The major goals of the initiative are to provide employees with insight into the Agency's/Department's/Administration's viewpoint on specific issues and to promote a greater understanding of how and why policy decisions are reached.



-Story by Kay Blakley
SWRO Public Affairs Staff

Let's Get in the Spirit for FNS 20th Anniversary

The year 1989 marks the Food and Nutrition Service's 20th year of helping people through its food programs.

Former Administrator Anna Kondratas noted the anniversary in a memo February 7, saying, "It is appropriate, I believe, to take the opportunity to celebrate this landmark in the agency's history and to review the changes that have occurred in programs, people, and the organization since 1969."

Kondratas appointed a steering committee to organize anniversary activities for August through September. Members are Jerry Boling, Vernon Morgan, Janet Osborne, Bonny O'Neil, Phyllis Weaver, John Webster, and chairperson Alberta Frost. All of them are eager to hear from FNS staff with ideas for the anniversary celebration. Events could range from a formal USDA ceremony to purely social events to something that would show the history of the programs and the agency.



After an overall program has been developed, there will be many opportunities for employees to participate in planning and conducting the events.

"All of our programs have a rich history and many people have contributed to their success," said Kondratas in her memo. "This is a tremendous opportunity to make our newer employees aware of the people and events of the past and to review our commitment to excellence in government."

-Story by Mary Kennedy
Public Information Staff

Headquarters Experiences Personnel Shifts

Familiar and unfamiliar faces will be appearing in different capacities at FNS as the new administration makes changes.

Currently, Scott Dunn is acting administrator, Molly Howell is a confidential assistant to Dunn, Gene Dickey is acting associate administrator, Tommy Mitchell is an executive assistant to Assistant Secretary John W. Bode, and Bonny O'Neil is acting deputy administrator for the Food Stamp Program.

Updates will be provided as further changes occur.

-Story by Mary Kennedy
Public Information Staff

MWRO Employs One of the 100 Women to Watch in 1989

Celeste Zywiciel is cited "as one of 100 women to watch in 1989" in January's Today's Chicago Woman. Those recognized in the article are considered to be "shaping Chicago's future and making a difference in our city...." An introduction to the article states, "If you know them or meet them, you'll find them vibrant people who are enthusiastic, if not passionate, about their work. And it's that passion that drives them onward to new challenges and levels of achievement for themselves and others."

The magazine notes that Celeste is a statistician with FNS and also the president of the board of directors of Chicago Federal Employee Child Care, Inc., which has established the first on-site child-care center for Federal employees in downtown Chicago.

-Story by MWRO
Public Affairs Staff

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing by Vacancy Number

| JOB TITLE | AREA OF CONSID. | SERIES | GRADE | CLOSING DATE | VACANCY NUMBER | OFFICE LOCATION |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| ○ Supvry Staffing Specialist | (USDA-N) | GS-212 | 13 | 02-21-89 | 89-69 | PED |
| ○ Food Prog Spec | (FNS-N) | GS-120 | 12 | 02-24-89 | 89-70 | PAD |
| ○ Home Economist | (A) | GS-493 | 12 | 03-14-89 | 89-H71 | HNIS |
| ○ Secretary Typing | (A) | GS-318 | 4/5 | 03-14-89 | 89-72 | FDD |
| ○ Secretary Typing | (A) | GS-318 | 6/7 | 03-01-89 | 89-73 | SFPD |
| ○ Management Analyst | (A) | GS-343 | 11/12 | 03-21-89 | 89-74 | IRMD |
| ○ Home Economist | (HNIS) | GS-493 | 11/12 | 03-07-89 | 89-H75 | HNIS |
| ○ Secretary Typing | (FNS-HQ) | GS-318 | 7 | 03-02-89 | 89-76 | CND |

Office Location

PED - Personnel Division
 PAD - Program Accountability Division
 HNIS - Human Nutrition Information Service
 SFPD - Supplemental Food Programs Division
 FDD - Food Distribution Division
 CND - Child Nutrition Division
 IRMD - Information Resources Management Division

Area of Consideration

(A) - All Sources
 (FNS-N) - Food and Nutrition Service (Nationwide)
 (HNIS) - Human Nutrition Information Service
 (USDA-N) - United States Department of Agriculture (Nationwide)
 (FNS-HQ) - Food and Nutrition Service (Headquarters)

(Tribes Continued)

seasonal produce. In November, produce items included apples, carrots, and melons. The City Market in nearby Cortez, Colorado, donated plastic carryout bags.

Feed My People allows the tribes to set eligibility requirements, but elderly people are given the highest priority. Ute Mountain residents and tribal members from the surrounding communities can participate in the Towaoc distributions. Melinda Bronson coordinates the Ute Mountain program.

Mary E. Kennedy, Editor

The Friday Letter is published every two weeks by the Public Information Staff of the Food and Nutrition Service. To update mailing address or to alter number of copies received, please mail changes to the FNS Public Information Staff, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 823, Alexandria, VA 22302, telephone 756-3000.

-Story by Joanne Widner
MPRO Public Affairs Staff